

Press Release

Progress on Poverty: Presidents, Ministers, and International Organizations Advocate Multidimensional Indices for Tracking the SDGs

- In a 2017 United Nations General Assembly high-level side event, representatives from countries and international institutions in all regions discuss using multidimensional poverty measures to track progress across the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- Countries are using both **national** Multidimensional Poverty Indices (MPIs) and the internationally-comparable **Global** MPI to report progress on the SDGs and coordinate poverty-reduction policies
- Speakers call for wider use of **policy-relevant** multidimensional measures to fight **interlinked** features of poverty and to **coordinate** high-impact **multi-sectoral** responses, and to **leave no one behind**.

On 19 September 2017, the President of Honduras is hosting a side event at the United Nations General Assembly in which policy leaders show how multidimensional poverty measures are helping to eradicate poverty in all its forms and dimensions. The event, entitled “Using the Multidimensional Poverty Index to Track Progress in the SDGs” is organized by the Government of Honduras on behalf of the [Multidimensional Poverty Peer Network](#) (MPPN), a South-South Network of 54 participating countries and 15 international organizations focused on multidimensional poverty measurement.

As countries embark on the challenge of eradicating poverty, which the SDGs refer to as our ‘greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development’, many are now using a multidimensional measure of poverty. Since 2011, under Nobel Laureate President Santos’ lead, **Colombia** has pioneered innovative ways that the MPI can gain a cross-cutting influence on highly coordinated policies that accelerate trends. **Mexico** was the first country to launch a multidimensional poverty measure in 2009. **Bhutan** launched the first South Asian MPI in 2010 and Bhutan’s Prime Minister is using the MPI to target every poor household. **Panama** launched its MPI in June 2017 – highlighting how MPI poverty levels in provinces ranged from 4% to 93%. **Costa Rica** uses its MPI for budget allocation, and last month launched a Business MPI (*bMPI*) that helps firms fight multidimensional poverty in their own employees’ households. **South Africa’s** SAMPI works to diagnose and confront youth deprivations, while in the **Philippines**, the MPI helped to show the fruit of its growth and strong public investments and may become a designated statistic. **Bangladesh** is actively building its first MPI, and **Egypt’s** Voluntary National Review analyses its reduction of the global MPI as it develops its own national MPI.

In such presentations, speakers explain how countries are using the MPI to expose the poorest groups, allocate resources, tackle interlinked SDG deprivations, and design integrated policies. Speakers show how a [Multidimensional Poverty Index](#) (MPI)—which reveals in stark detail the overlapping deprivations experiences by poor people at the same time—energizes a coordinated, effective, and multi-sectoral attack on poverty in all its dimensions, thus helping to make visible the connections across the SDGs and with the aim to ‘Leave no one behind’.

Supporting the countries are many international institutions. **UNDP** has been the pathbreaker, publishing a global MPI for acute poverty in developing countries every year since 2010, and engaging with the development of national MPIs in many countries. **The OECD** is considering implications that the high-resolution picture of multidimensional poverty has for donor countries – a leading voice among which is **SIDA**. These are joined on the panel by the **World Bank**, whose 2016 Atkinson Commission Report on Global Poverty proposed a MPI covering health, nutrition, education, living standards, work and violence as a measure of global poverty, and which is supporting national MPIs in countries as diverse as Nepal, Peru and Senegal. **UNICEF** fights child poverty at a time when – according to the global MPI, half of the world’s poor are children – and by so doing provides a strategic impulse with long-lasting effects. Furthermore, poverty differs by region. The **League of Arab States** mobilises governments to review poverty strategies and they with **UNESCWA** and **OPHI** are launching the **Arab Poverty Report** which contains a carefully designed regional MPI with plans for more harmonized data gathering.

Moderated by **OPHI** from the **University of Oxford**, this high-level side event will take place on Tuesday 19 September 2017, from 11:00am – 1:00pm during the 72nd United Nations General Assembly in New York, in UN Headquarters, Conference Room 2. Live and on-demand webcast coverage will be available on UN Web TV at <http://webtv.un.org/>.

Speakers at the event include:

- Juan Orlando Hernández, President of **Honduras**
- Fattah el-Sisi, President of **Egypt** (tentatively confirmed)
- Tshering Tobgay, Prime Minister of **Bhutan**
- Juan Manuel Santos, President of **Colombia** (by video)
- Enrique Peña Nieto, President of **Mexico** (by video)
- Ana Helena Chacón, Vice-President of **Costa Rica**
- Isabel de Saint Malo de Alvarado, Vice-President of **Panama**
- Jeff Radebe, Minister in the Presidency for Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, **South Africa**
- Adoracion M. Navarro, Undersecretary, National Economic Development Authority **Philippines**
- Shamsul Alam, Member General Economics Division, Ministry of Planning, **Bangladesh**
- Achim Steiner, Administrator, **UNDP**
- Angel Gurría, Secretary-General, **OECD**
- Thomas Gass, Assistant Secretary General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs, **United Nations**
- Ahmed Aboul Gheit, Secretary-General, **League of Arab States**
- Mohamed Ali Alhakim, Executive Secretary, **UN-ESCWA**
- Carin Jämtin, Director General, **Sida**
- Carolina Sanchez-Paramo, Senior Director for Poverty and Equity Global Practice, **World Bank**
- Laurence Christian Chandy, Director of Data, Research and Policy, **UNICEF**
- Sabina Alkire, **OPHI** and **MPPN** Secretariat, **University of Oxford**

For more information, or if you are interested in attending the event, please contact: mppn@ophi.org.uk. To arrange interviews please ring +1 (617) 821-6114 (John Hammock)

Notes for Editors

Target 1.2

By 2030, reduce at least by half the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions

Indicator 1.2.2

The Voluntary National Reviews of many countries in 2016-17 indicated they are using or are developing a National or the Global MPI or a related methodology to fight poverty in all its forms and dimensions. Countries include: [Bangladesh](#) (2017), [Belize](#) (2017), [Chile](#) (2017), [Colombia](#) (2016), [Costa Rica](#) (2017), [Egypt](#) (2016), [Guatemala](#) (2017), [Honduras](#) (2017), [India](#) (2017), [Indonesia](#) (2017), [Jordan](#) (2017), [Nepal](#) (2017), [Panama](#) (2017), [Philippines](#) (2016), [Sierra Leone](#) (2016), and [Tajikistan](#) (2017). The [website](#) with relevant excerpts from each VNR is [here](#); other relevant remarks from the 2017 HLPF are found [here](#). Many countries who have or are developing national MPIs to track progress in the SDGs have not yet issued the VNRs, but are MPPN members (see below).

The Multidimensional Poverty Peer Network (MPPN)

The MPPN is a South-South network of senior government officials from over 50 countries. It endorses the use of the global MPI for monitoring SDG target 1.2. It also promotes the design and use of national MPIs as powerful policy tools for both the eradication of poverty and better governance. The Steering committee includes South Africa, Mexico, Colombia and China as well as OPHI. MPPN members include Afghanistan, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Honduras, India, Iraq, Jamaica, Malaysia, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Senegal, Seychelles, South Africa, Sudan, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Uruguay and Vietnam.

The work of the Network is facilitated and coordinated by the Secretariat, which is housed at the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI), University of Oxford. For more information on the Network, please visit <http://www.mppn.org>.

The Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI)

OPHI is an economic research center within the Oxford Department of International Development at the University of Oxford. OPHI is led by Sabina Alkire, and works to develop and apply new ways of measuring and analyzing poverty, human development and welfare. Alkire and Professor James Foster developed the Alkire Foster counting approach to multidimensional measurement, which is used to calculate the global MPI published in UNDP's *Human Development Reports*, and has been adapted to construct national measures of poverty and wellbeing, for example in Mexico, Colombia and Bhutan. For more information about OPHI, please visit www.ophi.org.uk.

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